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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/406,575	09/24/1999	THOMAS J. BACHINSKI	293/008-CONT	1763

7590

03/06/2002

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EXAMINER

PREBILIC, PAUL B

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3738

DATE MAILED: 03/06/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/406,575	Applicant(s) BACHINSKI ET AL. CN	
	Examiner Paul B. Prebilio	Art Unit 3738	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 December 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
 If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
 a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Claim Objections

Claim 2 is objected to because of the following informalities:

Since the claim adds further limitations to an element previously recited and modified, "comprises" should be replaced with ---further comprises---.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) do not apply to the examination of this application as the application being examined was not (1) filed on or after November 29, 2000, or (2) voluntarily published under 35 U.S.C. 122(b). Therefore, this application is examined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

Claims 1-5 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Lazarus et al (EP 0680734) wherein the spring elements (131) of Lazarus et al are the first and second substructures as claimed with the hook-like elements (151) being the second substructure; see the whole document, especially Figures 10-15 and columns 17 and 18.

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Claims 1-4, 6, 16, and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Dwyer et al (EP 0701800); see the whole document (especially Figures 35-38) and the explanation of the above Lazarus et al rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Goldsteen et al (US 5,976,178) in view of Lazarus et al (WO 0680734) or Sakura, Jr. (US 4,214,587). Goldsteen meets the claim language except fails to disclose the resilient bias of the first substructure as claimed; see the whole document, especially Figures 34-38 and columns 16-19 where the second substructure is made of barbs (436) and the first substructure is made of ring (430a). However, both Lazarus and Sakura teach that it was known to make similar connectors elastically resilient and biased to expand during delivery; see the whole document of each. Hence, it is the Examiner's position that it would have been obvious to make the first substructure of Goldsteen (430a) resiliently biased to expand upon delivery for the same reasons that Lazarus and Sakura do the same and to avoid the use of a balloon.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed December 27, 2001 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In the traversal of Lazarus and Dwyer rejections, the Applicants argue that either Lazarus or Dwyer does not disclose "a connector for connecting an axial end portion of a graft to the side wall of an axial end portion of a patient's tubular body conduit." However, since this is merely how the device is intended to be used, it is considered structurally limiting only to the extent the language implies certain structure. Since Lazarus and Dwyer are capable of being used in the manner claimed, the claim language is considered fully met.

Next, Applicants argue that a connection between the side wall and a graft is not made by Lazarus or Dwyer. Again, since the claim language referred to is directed to how the device is intended to be used, it is considered structurally limiting only to that extent. Applicants are directed to MPEP 2111 to 2111.02 which are incorporated herein by reference thereto.

Applicants argue that the hooks of Lazarus and Dwyer only prevent axial migration not extending substantially radially outwardly to engage tissue surrounding an aperture in the side wall. Again, the Examiner posits that the structure of Lazarus and Dwyer are capable of performing the function recited. It is noted that these arguments contain terms and phrases not found in the claims, and thus, they are not commensurate in scope to the claims.

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Finally, Applicants argue that Goldsteen does not teach a resiliently biased first substructure that is biased to enlarge to at least some degree by itself as claimed. The Examiner agrees with this traversal and has changed the rejection ground to be Section 103.

Conclusion

Applicant should specifically point out the support for any amendments made to the disclosure, including the claims (MPEP 714.02 and 2163.06). Due to the procedure outlined in MPEP 2163.06 for interpreting claims, it is noted that other art may be applicable under 35 USC 102 or 35 USC 103(a) once the aforementioned issue(s) is/are addressed.

Applicant is respectfully requested to provide a list of all copending applications that set forth similar subject matter to the present claims. A copy of such copending claims is respectfully requested in response to this Office action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Paul Prebilio whose telephone number is (703) 308-2905. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday from 6:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Corrine McDermott, can be reached on (703) 308-2111. The fax phone number for this Technology Center is (703) 872-9301.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Technology Center 3700 receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0858.


Paul Prebilio
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3738